

Washington, DC -- On Thursday, Congressman Joe Sestak updated the public on the fourth meeting he has held since November 7th on the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airspace redesign and Philadelphia International Airport expansions. Since the election, Joe has met with an advisory board of local and national experts to assess the impacts of the FAA's proposal on citizens, covering critical areas ranging from sound and noise, to educational development and health, the impact on ground safety and property values, and the need for greater long-term planning. The board was convened to ensure that all issues regarding the FAA's proposal were objectively covered, so that Joe might then work with the FAA on full mitigation and accountability for the economic, health, and environmental impacts of airspace changes they are proposing on Joe's constituents.

"Just last night, I held the latest of my series of meetings to ensure the FAA's proposal is objectively assessed and held accountable for conducting a complete study of the economic impact, health effects, and the environmental impact of the airspace redesign project and other further airport expansions impacting my constituents," noted Joe. "These meetings along with community events enable me to incorporate diverse facts and views in my desire to fully mitigate the negative impact of flight pattern changes. While a thriving airport is important to the economic development of our region, I am committed to requiring the FAA to pursue a measured and sustainable course."

Additionally, this morning Joe spoke to Ed Meyers, his constituent from Woodlyn, Ridley Township, whose roof was damaged last night by ice falling from a plane.

"This morning I spoke to Mr. Meyers about how his family was, and expressed my desire to provide for the safety and well-being to the communities affected by planes flying overhead," added Joe. "I then asked him to join me when I present a briefing report/action plan next week that addresses the FAA airspace redesign and airport expansion. I mentioned to him that last September, I held a press conference in Ridley Park across from Lakeview Elementary School citing my deep concerns with the safety, environmental, health, and economic aspects of the proposed airspace redesign and airport expansion."

Joe's FAA Expert Advisory Board is composed of recognized national and local experts on aviation planning, sound/noise, air emissions, educational development, health, and economic development.

In recent weeks Joe has done the following:

- On December 14th, Joe held the first meeting of his FAA Expert Advisory Board
- On December 19th, Joe was briefed by FAA Airspace Manager Steve Kelley
- On December 28th, Joe held a follow-up meeting/report status with his FAA Expert Advisory Board
- On January 17th, Joe held a conference call/report status with FAA Expert Advisory Board
- On January 22nd, Joe will present his briefing report/action plan addressing the FAA airspace redesign over Philadelphia International Airport and airport expansions.

In December 2005, the FAA issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for redesigning the airspace surrounding the NY/NJ/Philadelphia Metropolitan Areas. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) indicated that the FAA failed to consider the full environmental impact of its proposed changes.

Earlier, Joe Sestak created a FAA Expert Advisory Board to address a number of critical issues, including health issues, emergency preparedness, air pollution, property values, and the full impact of noise when accounting for the proposed airport capacity expansions. Joe also contacted the Delaware County Council to follow-up on their efforts in the area. Joe has been working with his advisory board to present a briefing report/action plan so he can work best to influence the federal level-as well as a District-elected leader-to fully mitigate any impact of the FAA's proposal. He also plans to work fully with all the District-elected and non-elected leaders interested to ensure the best outcome for their constituents.

Joe has planned a meeting with Deputy Secretary of Transportation Maria Cino to discuss the proposed FAA airspace redesign and its impact on the residents of the 7th District, as well as one with the FAA Airspace Manager for a second time to meet with his FAA Expert Advisory Board. As a result, following this, Joe will be hosting a town hall event that will bring together the FAA experts, the FAA Airspace Manager, and concerned residents.

Joe's briefing report/action plan outlines five major issue areas that are of great public concern including: comprehensive long term planning, noise, air quality, ground safety, cumulative effects, aviation development streamlining, and addressing the challenges reported by a General Accounting Office report released back in 2000.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "DeepBlue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.*

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